Regional Internet-Competition in English Skills Among Russian-Speaking Medical Students: First Experience

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Currently being a highly qualified medical specialist means to be a member of an international medical society. One of the major resources to enter the international medical field is excellent English skills, as the English language has become a lingua franca in Medicine. Thus, our aim is to enhance students’ motivation to study English for professional purposes starting from the first year in the medical school. We organized the Internet competition in English skills among first-year students from two Russian medical schools (USMU in the Urals and KrasSMU in Siberia). The competition had three stages held during 30 days in November-December, 2014 via the Internet on the e-educational platforms of the universities. All tasks were related to medical profession. Overall 130 students took part in the competition doing the reading, listening and writing tasks at the first stage. The best 35 students continued their work at the second stage where they created a video on the topic “Health is not simply the absence of sickness”. Then 10 students were selected to participate in the final, which was held as a teleconference between the universities. The evaluation of students’ works was performed by competent English teachers. The results of the competition showed that medical students enthusiastically accepted new teaching methods developing their creativity. The first-year medical students expressed a desire for their involvement in unusual educational projects and were interested in studying English for professional purposes. Thus, we may include outstanding educational techniques in the studying process to keep medical students motivated and develop their individual skills and abilities. Moreover, such competitions promote better communication between the universities.